

LINK-UP

DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY
Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Bulletin No. 3

June 1992

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN 1592-1992



TRINITY
400

350
YEARS



Presbyterian Church in Ireland

A NOTE FROM THE HONORARY EDITOR

Anniversaries have a fascination for many people. When I was a young married man in the 'fifties trying to carve a niche for myself in journalism I was ever on the lookout for important anniversaries so that I might exercise my pen upon one of them for a newspaper article or radio talk. I was then the proud possessor of the two-volume set of Chambers's Book of days and of Everyman's Dictionary of dates, both of which I had bought in a secondhand bookshop for a few shillings. Years later it fell to my lot as a researcher to be the compiler of a monthly and yearly diary of anniversaries for the use of radio and television programme makers.

As I write important anniversary celebrations are taking place or in contemplation in each of the island's two capital cities. Trinity College, Dublin, is four hundred years old. Though not by any means the oldest university in these islands, it yet enjoys the same standing as do Oxford and Cambridge in England. Many of our Church's ministers (including her most eminent present-day historians) and not a few of her elders and ordinary members, male and female, are graduates of the University of Dublin, of which Trinity was originally intended to be one of a number of colleges.

Presbyterians were excluded from Trinity till 1793. The penal laws were directed at more than the Roman Catholics, who incidentally were in more recent times (in Dublin at any rate) barred from attending 'the Protestant university of Trinity College' until they had obtained written permission to do so 'from the ordinary of the diocese': he 'tolerated' their attendance subject to certain strict conditions. The rule was set aside in 1970.

The old Dublin joke about 'passing through Trinity'----- i.e., walking through the grounds from the front gate in College Green to the back entrance in Lincoln Place---- might well be applied to your editor, for he managed to attend only evening lectures while working as a nine-to-five junior civil servant at the very end of the 'forties. Yet it was an improving experience and I am particularly pleased to find that my youngest daughter, who took primary and higher degrees there within the last decade, should think it worth her while to come over from London in order to participate in the anniversary celebrations.

Shortly after my time at Trinity Dr Albert Joseph McConnell became Provost. He graced that office from 1952 till 1974. A Presbyterian, he was thereafter made a member of the Council of State, than which in the Republic of Ireland there is hardly a greater honour outside of the Presidency, which is of course an elective

office. Dr McConnell also served two terms as a vice president of the Royal Irish Academy.

The publication and distribution of this third issue of LINK-UP precedes by about a month the Church's three hundred and fiftieth anniversary, the first Presbytery on Irish soil having been formed at Carrickfergus, County Antrim, in 1642. Carrickfergus was for long a county in its own right. The landing-place of King William of Orange in 1690, it remained a town of major importance until its eclipse by Belfast. Samuel M'Skimin (1775-1843), a Presbyterian, was the historian of Carrickfergus and a copy of the first of a number of editions of his History (Belfast 1811) is in my collection. This is reputedly the first history ever published of an Ulster town, the honour of being the first printed history of an Irish town going to Lord's Youghal (1784). M'Skimin records that on 10 July 1642 'the first presbytery which met in Ireland sat here and placed several ministers in different parishes of the adjacent country. The ministers ordained by this presbytery enjoyed all the tythes of the parishes in which they were placed' (p.15).

Why is it, by the way, that so many writers are at such pains to point out that it was the officers of Monro's army who were the elders of the original presbytery? Were not 'NCOs and men' eligible for the eldership, or was it a case of 'gentlemen only'?

The Church's latest historian, the Very Rev. Principal Finlay Holmes, DD, a revised edition of whose Our Irish Presbyterian heritage (June 1985) is expected shortly, devotes a well-annotated chapter (pp 25-53) to 'Laying the Foundations of an Irish Presbyterian Church 1642-90', which will amply repay the reader's perusal. Readers who want merely a good summary will no doubt have seen Principal Holmes's '350 Years of Irish Presbyterian History' in the May issue of the Presbyterian Herald. From that official Church magazine we may be permitted to quote a few lines:

...There were Presbyterians in Ireland before 1642 but the formation of the first Presbytery was a turning point and is recognised as such. But even as we honour the faith and courage of our founding fathers (and mothers!) we must, in our Christian obedience today, ask questions about our beginnings... The circumstances of our origins and of our subsequent history raise questions today in some minds about our role in Irish history. Have we

simply been an ethnic Church, the Church of the Scots in Ireland? Even in Southern Ireland Presbyterian Churches have frequently been called the Scots' kirk and closely related to Scottish immigrants, military or civilian. History is an ongoing dialogue between the present and the past but we cannot always expect the past to answer the questions we pose in the present....

Dr Holmes quotes the Church's early historian, the Rev. Patrick Adair (1624-1694), as maintaining that some at least of the settlers had become agents of God's purpose to provide a clear witness to the gospel in this land. 'We cannot', concludes Finlay Holmes, 'claim that we have provided that witness during the 350 years of our history in Ireland but that remains our calling and our responsibility'.

The Bush still burns....

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We hope to publish Bulletin No. 4 for distribution at the October meeting of Presbytery. Will ministers, clerks of session, congregational secretaries and correspondents please send items for inclusion to me at Farranshane, GREYSTONES, Co. Wicklow, to reach me by MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER? My best thanks to all who helped to fill this issue in the middle of a postal dispute. One contributor travelled all the way from Marino to Greystones in order to deliver 'copy' in time. Two contributors faxed their reports to the printers, Kingfisher Press, to whom also our warm thanks for all their help and cheerful co-operation.

ABBEY

Reading the AGM report of Abbey congregation in the April issue of The Abbey Magazine --- the last to reach us before the postal dispute --- one can see how alive and vibrant the congregation is, and how caring too. The range of its activities is most impressive, considering that its membership does not run into high figures.

Abbey recently suffered the loss of one of its oldest members by the death of William Blythman at the age of eighty-six on 5 April. He left a widow, Ivy, two sons and two daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Mr Blythman's elder son Robert is Clerk of Session of Greystones congregation. A grandson, Philip Blythman, was admitted to full membership of the Church at Abbey on 29 March.

ADELAIDE ROAD DONORE

On Palm Sunday, 12 April 1992, the Rev. David C. Searle of Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church in Bangor, County Down, conducted worship in ARD and baptized Rebecca Jane, the infant daughter of the Rev. Frank and Mrs Claire Sellar. This was a well-attended and happy service. It was during his time as Assistant to Mr Searle that Frank was married to Claire by the Rev. David Searle.

Quite a number of our members were involved in the Luis Palau 'What's Missing?' Campaign. This involvement ranged from serving on the Executive Committee, counselling and nurturing new believers, to stewarding at the Point Dépôt. A double-decker bus was hired to transport people from Adelaide Road to The Point on Friday evening, 1 May, and a number of our folks were deeply blessed by Luis Palau's ministry.

One of our members, Terrie Colman-Black, is now Volunteer Co-ordinator for ACET in the Republic of Ireland, which is a Christian organisation affiliated to the Presbyterian Church's Board of Social Witness, seeking to provide practical care and support to people with AIDS and helping to equip the Church effectively to respond to this difficult national and global problem. The patrons of this worthy organisation are Dr George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cliff Richard and General Eva Burrows, Head of the Salvation Army. Further information about how Christian people might be of help is available by writing to ACET, P.O. Box 3400, Dublin 14.

We are looking forward to three major events in the near future. The Adelaide

Road Donore Fête will be held in the Manse garden (5 Maple Road) on Saturday afternoon, 20 June. Everybody is warmly welcome. The following evening (Sunday 21 June) at 7 p.m. Mr John Scott, student for the ministry and currently Assistant at Belmont Presbyterian Church, East Belfast, will be 'licensed to preach the gospel' by the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster in Adelaide Road Donore. We congratulate John on reaching this milestone in his life, after studies at UCD, the University of Aberdeen and Union Theological College, and wish him God's blessing in the future. After great interest in the Children's Holiday Club last year, we hope to run another for the children of the community who live near our church. This will take place from Wednesday 1 July to Saturday 4 July. Your prayers for this venture would be greatly appreciated.

Frank Sellar

BALLYMOTE

Plans are in progress to undertake major repairs to our old schoolhouse (now the church hall) during the summer months.

The annual sale in aid of the Irish Motor Neurone Association has taken place, with over £2,000.00 raised. Our thanks to all who contributed and helped in this effort.

On Sunday 26 April we welcomed Dr and Mrs Will Patterson and family from Killinchy, County Down. Dr Patterson conducted our service.

Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Hubert Bell who celebrated their Golden Wedding. Mr and Mrs Bell were married in Marmullane Church, Passage West, County Cork, on 27 April 1942. We pray that they will have many more years of happiness together.

Congratulations to three of our Table Tennis members who won first place in Division 3 of the Sligo League: they are Charles Hodgins, Alan Taylor and John Hodgins. Alan Taylor also won Player of the Year award. Henry Patterson, Mervyn Bright and Harry Bell also did very well in this League. Henry and Mervyn came second in the Sligo Table Tennis Tournament. Mark Thorpe and Thelma Bell did very well in the mixed doubles. Well done to all!

Harriet Bell and Edith Thorpe

BLACKROCK: ST ANDREW'S

Baptism: 29 March: Fiona Sinead, daughter of Cecil and Alison Boyd of 244 Moyville, Ballyboden Road.
Deaths: 24 March: John Armstrong of 4 Deansgrange Road.
30 April: Gordon Milne of 10 Avondale Park, Carysfort Avenue.

Members of all local churches came to St Andrew's for the Women's World Day of Prayer service on 6 March. The service was led by Cherry Poynton. On 12 April PWA members from many of the congregations in our presbytery met for Friendship Day. We had a lively and interesting talk by Rev. George Grindle, minister of the Kinghan Church for the deaf in Belfast.

The Boys' Brigade held an excellent display in our hall on 11 April. The high standards of the 22nd Dublin Company are being admirably maintained. Inspecting officer was the Rev. Johnston McMaster of the Methodist Youth Department.

The Roman Catholic parish of St Therese's, Mount Merrion, held an exhibition in their school on the weekend of 25 - 26 April. We were invited to set up a stall to advertise the work and activities of our church. An attractive stand was put together by Denis Poynton and Steven Anderson and leaflets were handed out explaining who we are and what we do. The people of the Mount Merrion area were delighted that the Presbyterian church had taken part in their exhibition. Many friendships were made and old ones strengthened.

The good-as-new sale on 2 May raised the sum of £532.00.

The anniversary service on May 17 took the form of a joint celebration for both Blackrock and Bray congregations. The guest preacher was Rev. Cecil McCullough. Lunch for everyone was enjoyed after the service.

On Saturday 13 June from 3 p.m. until 5 the lovely garden of Mrs Edith Merton at 28 Glenart Avenue was open to the public and especially the congregation, as a fund-raising venture. We are grateful to Philip and Edith for organising this event.

Denis Campbell

BRAY: ST ANDREW'S

On 1 March we had a United Communion Service with our Methodist friends. These services are held bi-annually in the two churches and help to keep a link between us.

The new motor has been fitted to our organ and we are hoping that this will be the

last of the refurbishments needed in St Andrew's for some years.

Our AGM was held on 5 March and everyone enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and the usual delicious supper. The following evening members of our congregation took part in the Women's World Day of Prayer. Also during the same month at the AGM of our PWA we planned our programme for '92-'93 and elected Mrs Mabel Winder as our new President.

Seven members attended 'Friendship Day' in Blackrock Church and were most interested in the Rev. George Grindle's sermon and insight into the loneliness of his deaf congregation in Kinghan Church, Belfast, who yet appreciate the singing of hymns and songs and the fellowship which this congregation gives them.

We held a Good Friday service and our usual Easter Communion when we welcomed a goodly number of visitors and were glad to see the church so full.

On 17 May we held a Joint Anniversary Service with Blackrock Church and had lunch together afterwards in their lovely hall.

Our annual PWA Sale was held in the Epworth Hall on Saturday 23 May.

We have been deeply saddened by the unexpected death of Miss Jennie Wolfe on 27 April. Jennie was a member of our Kirk Session and a most active member in all branches of the Church's activities for many years until recently. She was known and loved by us all and we shall miss her outgoing and caring presence in our midst.

We cherish her true Christian spirit and will all remember her with deep affection. To her sister, brother and family our hearts go out in loving sympathy.

CLONTARF

The congregation of Clontarf welcomes the opportunity to appear in this issue of LINK-UP.

The ladies of the Congregation were busy during February and March organising and attending travelling coffee parties and taking orders for baking to raise funds for the Spring Fair on 28 March. The weather on the morning of the Fair was kind, enabling the Sunday School children to participate in a sponsored bounce on a Bouncing Castle in the Church grounds. The Fair was a great success socially as well as financially, raising over £3,000.00 for Church funds.

At the beginning of March we welcomed Miss Kate Manning as our new organist.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 2 April with a good attendance in spite of the inclement weather.

We welcomed two new communicants, Laura McDermott and Ruth Harold, to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on 5 April.

It is with regret that we say goodbye to the Rev. David Bruce but wish him every success on his appointment as General Director of Scripture Union in Northern Ireland. Following the Service on 19 April a presentation of cutlery and cheque was made on behalf of the Congregation to Zoe and David by Mrs Sara Wilson, the oldest attending member. We wish David, Zoe and the children God's Blessing in their new home.

The Boys' Brigade Display was held on 25 April when the Inspecting Officer was Mr D Kennedy and the Girls' Brigade Display on 1 May when Mr Jim Hodgins presented the prizes.

Baptism: 12 April Daniel Keith O'Flaherty.

The service on 2 May was conducted by Rev. Dr Wm O'Neill, Convener of the Presbyterian Vacancy Commission.

Hopefully in the next issue there will be news about the filling of the vacancy.

Valerie J. Dagg

ORMOND QUAY AND SCOTS

Greetings from Ormond Quay and Scots! This is our first submission to LINK-UP and we trust it will not be our last. For those of you who do not know our location, we are in the city centre of Dublin at Lower Abbey Street, between the VHI and the Abbey Theatre. The name of our Church would give the impression that we are on the quays. Should you be in Dublin we would love to see you: our service commences at 11.40 a.m.

On Sunday 19 April our minister, the Rev. David Bruce, left us to take up an appointment with Scripture Union in Belfast. He gave his farewell message at a service held at 3.30 p.m., after which all present enjoyed a cup of tea. Presentations were made to David, Zoe and the children.

During the vacancy our good friend Dr William O'Neill of Howth and Malahide will be the convener.

The PWA held their Autumn Sale which was well attended, over £600.00 being raised for the Missions. In appreciation of the support given by members of the congregation they held a Valentine's Night party which was enjoyed by all.

Our Carol Service held during lunch-time Christmas Week raised £112.00 and this was divided between the Salvation Army and Alone.

On our premises we house the City Mission and this is run by Ken and Betty Jackson who spend a lot of time looking after the needy and take them for a holiday in the summer. The Scots Centre, run here by the Church's Board of Social Witness, is also the headquarters of the Boys' Brigade.

On Good Friday we were joined by members of Clontarf, Abbey, Adelaide Road Donore and Dublin Central Mission. There was a good attendance and the collection in aid of the Kinghan Mission, Belfast, raised £230.00.

Our Bowling Club represented by the ladies won the HOPE CUP and a team participating in the McElwaine Cup got to the semi-final. Our Badminton Club had a lean year as regards trophies, but they did enjoy the year.

On Sunday 10 November 1991 we did a television service from Montrose which went off well, if one is to judge by the number of letters our minister received.

This summer we again expect an 'Outreach Team' from Northern Ireland. They will be located on our premises and will be spreading the Gospel on the streets to the people of Dublin.

Mrs Laura Taylor (Foster) presented a gift of hymn books and a public address system in memory of her father who was Clerk of Session for many years. Laura is resident in the UK now but pays regular visits to us.

We send greetings to our members who are ill and to those unable to attend regularly.

Death: The death took place on 27 April 1992 of our dear friend Eddie Jones. To Nora and relatives we offer our deepest sympathy.

Baptism: Alexandra, daughter of John and Sylvia Culligan, on 12 April 1992.

Robert Grealey

TRINITY CORK

We were saddened by the sudden death on 17 January of Nessie O'Regan. Nessie came to Cork as a young bride from Scotland nearly 50 years ago.

It has also been sad to say goodbye to Graham and Louise Shaw and Alexandra and Robert who are moving to Waterford. Our committee is also diminished by the secondment to Bulgaria of Iain MacLean, who had recently taken up duties as our treasurer. Iain, who is Environmental Protection Officer for Cork County Council will be advising on pollution control in Bulgaria.

New arrivals this year have been Norman Waugh, originally from Cork, who had been involved in Bray and previously with Ormond Quay and Scots' congregation, and Dorothee Tratnik from Germany doing research in Irish at UCC. Dorothee provided us with a 300-year-old Irish prayer for our Good Friday service and we were moved to have her admitted as a communicant member on profession of faith on Easter Sunday. It may interest more than one minister in Presbytery and others that she is also very proficient in Scots "Gallie", having studied at Aberdeen.

Among special services recently, the Rev. John Faris was the preacher at the city service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and Trinity hosted the Annual Peace Service, where the preacher David Montgomery and Sharon Wylie a teacher from Donegall Road Belfast made a striking impact. The Cork City company of the Girls' Brigade held their 50th Display on 25 April with a special service in Trinity on the following day. It was a special delight to welcome back the founding Captain Mrs Isobel Davidson who was in the Rutland Square company before coming to Cork. She now lives in Bangor. One of the pyramids in the display had the theme 'Past, Present and Future' and this could sum up our experience this Spring: 'Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever.'

AGHADA

Our Lent series of Bible Studies this year took the theme of 'Jesus: tempted; healer; teacher; worker of miracles' with a session on the historical evidence for the truth of the New Testament. It was encouraging to see so many families represented as we met in different homes.

On 24 April the church was beautifully decorated and the sun shone for the wedding of Jennifer Jeffery and Niall Daly. As a nurse was marrying a solicitor the minister in his address emphasised the caring and the legal aspects of the marriage covenant!

John Faris

DROGHEDA

Annual Greenhills Conference

This interesting and popular event took place on Monday 20 January and was marked by a large and attentive audience. The theme this year was Working Together: Urban and Rural Outreach. The speakers were the Rt Rev. Dr S G Poyntz, Bishop of Connor, Mr J Maher, MEP, and the Rev. Johnston McMaster, Methodist Youth Adviser. Much discussion took place after the talks. Thanks were expressed to the Sisters of the Presentation Convent for the use of the facilities. This is the Silver Jubilee of this conference.

Ecumenical Songs of Praise

The Church of the Holy Family was the venue for the annual celebration to mark the advent of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The parish priest acted as host and welcomed all present. Father O'Reilly had invited the curate of the Lourdes Church, Father John Gates, to preach and the rector of the Julianstown Group, the Rev. J Nelson, to take part. Monsignor Francis Donnelly, parish priest of St Peter's Church, attended. The offering was in aid of the Irish School of Ecumenics. Tea was served to all present by the ladies of the parish.

Mosney Holiday Centre

This centre, formerly Butlins, opens for the season at the end of May and continues into September. There are lots of things to interest all age groups. Services of worship, under the auspices of the Methodist, Church of Ireland and Presbyterian Churches, are held each Sunday at 10.15 a.m. in the Prayer Room.

Coffee Afternoon and Bring-and-Buy

This annual event held on 28 February 1992 was supported by large crowds and the many items for sale were eagerly snapped up. The funds of the Church benefited by the superb sum of £1,390.65. The ladies are to be congratulated on their hard work to achieve such an excellent result.

World Day of Prayer

The venue for this annual event for the Drogheda area, held on 6 March 1992, was St Mary's Church of Ireland. All Churches took part and there was a good attendance. The theme for this year was Living Wisely with Creation. The women

of Austria, Germany and Switzerland were responsible for drawing up the order of service.

ERVEY

United Service

The annual united service with St Ernan's Church of Ireland took place on Sunday 19 January. The service was conducted by the minister who welcomed all that had come. The preacher was the Venerable T G Corrigan, the Archdeacon of Meath. The collection was for the work of the Bible Society.

Ecumenical Service

This annual expression of unity was held, as usual, in the Community Centre, Kingscourt. The parish priest, Father Andrew Farrell, the curate, Father Michael Mead and the Archdeacon of Meath, the Venerable T G Corrigan, took part along with members of the various Churches. The preacher was the Rev. Charles McCurdy. The offering was for the work of the Irish School of Ecumenics.

Baptism

Benjamin William, son of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Frazer, Mullinacross, born 9 November 1991 and baptised 1 March 1992.

Good Wishes

All the congregation were much saddened at the illness of the Clerk of Session, Mr E C Porter, and good wishes were sent to him for a speedy recovery.

World Day of Prayer

Ervey Church hosted the World Day of Prayer on 6 March this year. Representatives from all Churches attended from Kells, Kingscourt and the surrounding area. Much favourable comment was made on the excellent arrangements and the atmosphere of worshipfulness. Tea was served to all present.

Charles McCurdy

DUN LAOGHAIRE

In trying to decide what would be different and therefore of interest about this Presbytery's largest if somewhat conventional, though generous, Congregation, the opening of our 5th Minute Book records an unique event in November 1988 of a Candlelight Prayer Pilgrimage through the streets of Dun Laoghaire, complete with Garda escort and a gaggle of small boys, from St Michael's Church (RC) to York Road 'in sympathy with those suffering in Enniskillen' which reads:

'Lest WE forget.....

Between the closing of the 4th and the opening of this, the 5th Minute Book of the Congregational Committee of Dun Laoghaire Presbyterian Church since its formation in 1828, this Committee wishes to record the salutary gesture made in the interim -

When as a result of man's continuing self-justified inhumanity to man in defiance of God's law, as exemplified by Enniskillen, the hand of compassion and sympathy was extended by our 'neighbours' from St Michael's Church.

In remembrance of which we, the undersigned, who being present at the First Meeting recorded in this Minute Book have joined our names to some of those from St Michael's, who instigated this Pilgrimage, acknowledging that while our routes may differ the goal of our earthly pilgrimage is identical.'

Perhaps there's hope for us all yet!

Bill Nesbitt

GREYSTONES AND ARKLOW

Hi Everybody!!

Hope you are looking forward to the summer! We are because of the visitors and friends who come each year and those unexpected folk who bring us contact from other places.

Children expectantly await CSSM in Greystones and Holiday Bible Club in Arklow. On 21 June Greystones Sunday Club will lead the Service and then the Congregation will meet up with the Arklow folk in Avondale for a Picnic Lunch. Our two congregations often meet through the year and there is a marvellous mixing together for which we thank our Lord. We were also able to mix with other Sunday School children and leaders in Arklow - about 100 of us enjoyed worship

in Arklow Church and then we went to Avoca Manor for a sumptuous bar-b-cue and outdoor sports.

It's wonderful how God uses our people even when our congregations are small. The influence of our people goes into the community and wider. Some of our students have a refreshing input into the CU of University and College while our more mature Christians give the lead in local Bible Groups. Our Arklow ladies were able to share their knowledge of some women of the Bible with ladies in Wicklow and they obviously had great joy in doing it.

In Greystones, new managers have come to the YWCA. Several of our members are helping on the Committee so, if you want a good break with a convivial atmosphere, the YW awaits you. 'Carrig Eden' has been bought by a group based in Dublin and they hope to use it to give deprived youth a holiday and to have a base for theological study. We wish them the blessing of the Lord.

In a recent 'Full membership' group our folk took a deep interest in On Profession of Faith, published by the Christian Training Committee of the relevant Board of our Church. It is really worth the purchase and, with the work sections, is most useful for personal study as well.

We find that, in our areas, people are looking for real answers to real questions. This gives impetus and challenge to the total witness of our congregations and shows that there is a stirring of hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit. Real answers come from a balance of the experience of the pressures of life and an understanding of the Word of God, an understanding worked into us by the Holy Spirit as we learn in daily life to rely not on ourselves but on His gracious influence and power.

What a great God we are privileged to know and serve!!

Don't forget! If you are in our area, we would love to see you. Sunday Worship times are: Arklow at 9.30 a.m. and Greystones at 11.30 a.m. During July and August, Greystones has the "40-Minute Spot" at 7.30 p.m. There's a welcome on the mat - and in our hearts!

Jim Carson

HOWTH

This year the 'Howth Community' with the assistance of the Catholic, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland churches presented their third annual production of 'The Nazarene' in the Presbyterian Church, Howth, from Monday 6 April to Friday 10 April inclusive, nightly at 8 o'clock. With the kind permission of Dr Bill O'Neill we had the use of the Presbyterian Church for some of our rehearsals. We have performed in Howth for the past two years and last year went on the road so to speak and gave two one-night stands in Bayside and Merchant's Quay. It has had an amazing effect on the young adult population of Howth. The general

comment from those who have seen it is that, watching the Passion performed in the week preceding Holy Week is a great preparation for the Holy Week ceremonies and brought the story of the Passion alive for many.

Joe Stewart

NAAS

Our Minister, the Rev. Jack Drennan, and family will be leaving us shortly for Clontibret Congregation in County Monaghan. They have been with us for the past four years and during that time have played an active part in the local community, especially through the local National School and a youth club. Jack pioneered the use of Mission Praise in our Worship and has brought a more flexible element to our services. We pray for God's blessing on Jack, Gillian and Ruth, Peter, Mark and Stuart in their new charge.

Our main fundraising event was held as usual on the June Bank Holiday Monday. That is the Kill Gymkhana which is organised by the community and the profit split between the three local churches. It is a very good example of local co-operation and has all the usual side-shows as well as the serious business of the pony jumping. It was held in Goff's on the Naas Dual Carriageway which has been the venue for the past two years.

Some members of our Sunday School participated in the Presbytery Sunday School Event in Arklow and had a very enjoyable day. We are looking forward to our own Sunday School outing later in June.

Miss Babs Worrell, from Rathmore, Naas, died on 8 May in Athy. She was one of the longest-serving members of our congregation and was a regular attender up until recent times. We offer our sympathies to her sister, Annie Gyves, who lives in Blessington.

Cliff Kirker,
Clerk of Session

CHRIST CHURCH RATHGAR

On Sunday 2 February 1992 Christ Church Rathgar held its 130th Anniversary at which the guest preacher was the Very Rev. Principal Finlay Holmes. His message was one of encouragement to the congregation of CCR to go forward into the next millenium, not only with hope, but with a conviction borne out of our history that the PCI has so much to contribute to all aspects of life in the Republic.

Co-incidentally, from 30 January to 2 February CCR held its first Flower Festival. At the height of winter, this proved to be a great attraction because people of all denominations, in great numbers, came to view the magnificent displays, all based upon 'Life at the Crossroads' i.e., the dominant position of our church at Rathgar crossroads. Almost £9,000.00 was raised by this event, to meet the target of our Renovation and Restoration Fund (£50,000.00).

United Lenten meetings were held in Brighton Road Methodist Church Hall on the five Wednesdays of Lent, on the theme of the Personalities of the Passion. These meetings brought together Methodists, Church of Ireland, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians from the Rathgar/Terenure area.

The highlight of Lent itself came on Maundy Thursday evening, when Holy Communion was celebrated at CCR in the traditional Presbyterian way with the congregation joining the Minister at table to commemorate the Last Supper by sharing the broken bread and partaking of the Common Cup.

Alex Gibson

TULLAMORE AND MOUNTMELICK

After the AGM of Tullamore congregation on 26 February an audience drawn from several denominations were given a talk entitled 'A visit to Czechoslovakia', illustrated with slides of the beautiful city of Prague, the Czech Lands and Slovakia, including a visit to a parish of the Church of the Czech Brethren. In spite of its name, this Church is Presbyterian and has faithfully maintained its work and witness through the dark days of totalitarian rule.

The same illustrated talk followed the AGM of Mountmellick congregation on 6 March.

On Sunday 15 March, the nationwide Day of Prayer for Peace in Ireland, Tullamore experienced what must have been one of the most memorable ecumenical events in the town's recent history. The townsfolk were invited to gather at St Catherine's Church of Ireland and thereafter to march in a silent candlelight procession to each of the town's other churches in turn, for brief prayers and meditation. The response exceeded all expectations. Over 1,000 people thronged the route and overflowed onto the street in front of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches which were packed to more than capacity. A huge crowd attended the final prayers at the Roman Catholic Church of the Assumption, from where they dispersed.

At a meeting of Offaly County Council the following Monday, the occasion was described as 'very beautiful and moving'.

Girvan McKay

THE EDUCATION FUND

Presbytery decided at its meeting in February 1965 to set up a fund to assist children within the bounds of Presbytery to obtain education which might, because of financial difficulties, be otherwise denied to them, and at that meeting a committee under the convenership of the late Rev. Dr W T McDowell was appointed to look into the matter and set up the proposed fund. The first meeting of that committee was held on 1 March 1966 when it was decided that education grants would be given in deserving cases that merited assistance. By the end of that meeting a total of £100.00 had already been subscribed towards the target in the first year of £250.00. In fact the income of the Fund for that year with the assistance of £150.00 from Church House totalled £605.16.2d and the Grants made totalled £335.00.

It was realised that during the first years of the Fund, the totals of the grants would have to be increased each year until the full number of years normally spent by a pupil at secondary level were covered, assuming that the grants would commence at entry. This was achieved by increased contributions from congregations and Church House up to 1977 when the PA Foundation undertook to contribute annually for a period of 4 years £3.00 for every £1 subscribed by congregations to a limit of £2,500.00. This brought about a dramatic improvement in the Fund's finances, and, even though at that time school fees were rising dramatically, the Fund was able to extend its activities to helping students at third level, which was a natural follow-on for some of the pupils who had by then completed their secondary education. Unfortunately, congregational contributions were not sufficient at first to take full advantage of the Foundation's offer, but by 1980/81 this was achieved and in that year the grants awarded amounted to £3,240.00. In 1980 the Foundation agreed to extend its subvention for a further two years with an increased limit of £4,000.00 but congregational subscriptions declined during the next year. Happily they increased the following year and the Foundation subvention went up to £3,798.00 in 1982/83. During that year the Foundation undertook for a further period of 3 years to increase its annual subscription to £5.00 for every £1 subscribed by the congregations to an upward limit of £5,000.00, with the result that its subvention of 1983/84 went up to £4,533.00. For several years Church House had increased its assistance to £600.00 each year and as a result the grants in 1983/84 totalled £6,930.00.

Last year the Foundation undertook for a further 10 years to contribute £5.00 for every £1 contributed by congregations up to a maximum of £6,000.00 which gives the committee a great sense of security for the future, but not a feeling of complacency, for every penny received by the Fund can be spent twice over on

this very essential work.

The last year for which accounts have been completed was the year to 31 May 1991. In that year congregations contributed £1,959.00, Church House gave £900.00 and the Foundation gave the full £6,000.00. The level of grants is being gradually increased within safety limits and the total awarded during that year was £8,125.00. During the current year they have increased to £9,340.00.

The Fund basically relies on congregational subscriptions and the Committee looks forward to all the congregations within Presbytery contributing in a regular and increasing manner, which position has unfortunately not yet been reached.

A.Dermot Mason

SOUTHERN CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIAL WITNESS BOARD

The title of this committee may have added meaning with the appointment of the minister of Cork in succession to the Rev. David Bruce. Although our projects at present are all Dublin-based we do try to remember all parts of the Presbytery and the Synod. The Home from Home project providing respite care for families with mentally handicapped members is available for the whole country. A second holiday week around St Patrick's Day went well at the Lucan Youth Centre.

ACET Aids Care Education Trust aims to offer a Christian approach to this spreading disease. Terrie Colman-Black of Adelaide Road Donore congregation has been appointed as their first worker in Dublin and the Republic of Ireland. For further information about any aspect of Social Witness please contact the Scots' Centre in Lower Abbey Street 01 788572 or the Rev. John Faris, 63 Rochestown Rise, Cork 021 891437. We will be pleased to get any news cuttings or other information from your area in order to build up our knowledge of problems and possibilities for service throughout the country.

NEXUS IRELAND - BUILDING FOR PEACE

Nexus Ireland is a reconciliation initiative of the Youth Board of the Presbyterian Church and is based within our own Presbytery at Lucan Youth Centre. To fill you in on the background, the centre was purchased in 1986 by the Youth Board and extensively renovated. Its purpose - a place where young people might find peace with God and with each other.

The youth centre was officially opened by the then President of Ireland, Dr Patrick Hillery, on 27 September 1987.

We in the Dublin and Munster Presbytery often feel apart from the ongoing troubles in the North of our island and tend to 'leave them to get on with it'. But as Christians and as part of the Presbyterian Church, whose members are widely affected by the violence, we have a part to play and an opportunity to be involved through the plans and ministry of Nexus Ireland.

Young people see no apparent solutions to the problems surrounding them and have only the prejudices of former generations to guide them. Self-perpetuating cycles of ignorance and mistrust leave little hope for the future.

The churches have attempted to bring a Christian response to this confused situation, but Church leaders are too often caught in the trap of representing the entrenched attitudes of their members.

Fresh, creative and courageous approaches are needed to break the cycle of ignorance and prejudice. To give today's youth a future and a hope, new cycles of informed knowledge and trust must be established.

In a response to this challenge, the Youth Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has set up Nexus Ireland. The objective is to educate and train young people from all sides of the community to accept one another in an atmosphere of Christian understanding.

At present the youth centre is used by young people from North and South and from every denomination for their weekends or weeks away from their home environment, for training, for strengthening friendships, for new experiences as a group. Many young Presbyterians have crossed the border for the first time, coming to a centre that is Presbyterian-owned and run and from here experiencing a different culture and a city without the fears and restrictions of Belfast.

Since September 1990, David Montgomery has been working as Youth Reconciliation Officer, encouraging and training young people North and South towards better understanding of their neighbours on this island, to help break down walls and to assist in cross-community initiatives. He has put together programmes for training youth leaders and to give young people from cross-community groups a cross-cultural experience where they can explore their differences in an atmosphere of Christian understanding.

In order to reach more young people effectively, we also need to expand and improve our facilities. In the North, leisure centres are well equipped and plentiful. We want to offer residential accommodation with recreational facilities

on site and the culture of Dublin city on our doorstep, not to mention lakes, mountains and forest walks all within easy reach.

Having the Youth Centre so near to Dublin also provides a place where the young Presbyterians from Dublin and beyond can feed into the activities and training or meet with groups from the North and we have had good numbers of young people from the Presbytery getting involved here over the past four years.

We plan to build three chalets, one urgently needed for accommodation for our new director Maurice Kennedy and his wife Helen, the others for small group training, or alternative accommodation for groups of individuals who come to experience life at Lucan Youth Centre.

Later plans include a new residential block with more flexible sleeping accommodation and a new dining block and kitchen. To provide a variety of activities we then plan to erect a sports hall and have a wide selection of activities such as archery, tennis, bar-b-q area available on site.

Obviously all these plans for the future are costly, but we are investing for a better future for our young people and we want to show them that the Church is doing something worthwhile instead of just seeming part of the problem.

Where are the funds coming from? The International Fund for Ireland has granted £100,000 in matching funds, i.e., when we spend money on capital they give us back half. The Ireland Fund has given salary support for the reconciliation officer. We have churches in Northern Ireland and in the USA who help in supporting the development work and also Irish-American contacts who are very excited by our project. The Presbyterian Church itself funded the initial purchase and renovation and is limited in further aid.

How can you help? In January a meeting was held with members from some of the Dublin churches. Look out for more information about Nexus Ireland at your church. We will also be hosting an open day at the Youth Centre for folks to bring along their families and see for themselves what is happening here. Please remember the ministry here in your prayers and become part of this fresh initiative of our church.

Lucan Youth Club is looking for a piano.
If you know of one not being used, we can
give it a good home. Tel: 6280 393

Gwen Montgomery
Lucan Youth Centre
Primrose Lane
Lucan, Co. Dublin